vitamin-A rich Indian rice varieties to be used by resource poor farmers are expected within 5-6 years.

Coconut Oil as Petrol and Diesel Substitute

3934. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether coconut oil offers cheap substitute to petrol and diesel, as found out by a Thai farmer;

(b) whether Government would tap its potential and undertake research to help in boosting the rural economy; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAW AT): (a) to (c) The techno-economic feasibility and viability of using coconut oil as a petrol/diesel substitute is yet to be established. Various institutions are already involved in conducting research on agro substitutes for fossil fuels and this includes coconut oil among other oils.

Measures to Combat Earthquakes

† 3935. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the news item published in Hindustan dated 18th February, 2001 under the caption "Desh Ka Koi bhoobhag bhukamp se surakshit nahi";

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard; and

(c) the details of the effective and immediate measures taken by Government to settle the problems highlighted in the said news-item?

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As per the seismic zoning map prepared by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the country has been divided into five seismic zones. Out of these zones, zone 5 is considered to be the most severe while the zone 1 is the least. In order to quantify the seismic hazard in the country, the Government has initiated a programme on micro-zonation of the various cities located in zones—4 & 5. As a first step in this direction, micro-zonation of Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh has been started and is expected to be completed in about a year. India Meteorological Department (IMD) has recently upgraded its seismological observational network for better location and detection of earthquake activity. Through the scientific studies, building codes have been prepared by BIS and are available for use of public. These codes need to be adequately used for design & construction of buildings and retrofitting of the existing structures.

Diversion of Lab Reserve Fund towards Phone Bills in CSIR Labs

3936. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor Genera! of India for the year ended March, 1999 (No. 5 of 2000) after examining the records of (IIP, NPL, NCL, NISCOM, CMERI, IMTECH) laboratories of CSIR for the period 1994—99 states that the Directors of the above institute spent Rs. 77.41 lakhs from Lab Reserve Fund towards telephone/mobile phone bills during the period 1994—99; and

(b) if so, the annual budget allotted and the amount spent for telephone/mobile phones of each institute, year-wise and category-wise during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) CSIR allocates funds to each of the National Laboratory/Institute under the head